

HISTORIC SEATTLE



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PATTY WHISLER

JOHN CHANEY, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

HISTORIC SEATTLE FOUNDATION

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CHAIR

STEVE ARAM

JOHN CHANEY

JAMES FEARN

GARY GAFFNER

MARIE STRONG

PAMELA ZYTNICKI

AWV Project Office
Allison Ray
999 Third Avenue, Suite 2424
Seattle, Washington 98104

June 1, 2004

Dear Ms. Ray,

Historic Seattle, chartered in 1974 to protect Seattle's architectural heritage, would like to comment on the draft environmental impact statement for the Alaskan Way Viaduct project. The problem of replacing the viaduct presents a great opportunity for the city as it envisions plans for a new and improved waterfront. Our organization recognizes the hard work of Allied Arts of Seattle and the City of Seattle over the past few years as leaders in a public discussion about what our waterfront might be.

Historic Seattle has also been concerned about the future of the waterfront and the way in which its significant heritage will be recognized within waterfront plans, and within alternatives for the viaduct.

We support alternatives that better connect the city to the water, especially in areas such as Pioneer Square and Pike Place Market whose historic relationship to Elliott Bay have been blocked by the viaduct and ground level transportation. These historic districts are tourist attractions, economic centers, and play an important role in the identity of the city. Alternatives that incorporate better connections between these places and the water would support historic preservation and the best interests of the city as a whole.

The cut and cover alternative presents an incredible opportunity for preservation and economic development along Alaskan Way. The streetscape of older buildings along Alaskan Way has long been blocked by the physical and visual barrier of the viaduct. If this structure were removed, the water-facing side of these buildings would be well suited for increased business activity and mixed-rate housing. Whatever use these building might take on, their preservation would be significantly enhanced by being able to see them.

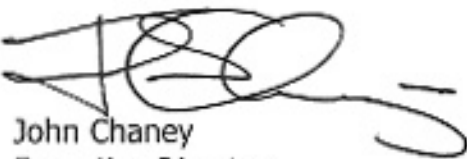
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AWWSP Team Office

We are concerned about the Washington Street Boat Landing, also known as the Harbor Station Master Building, Pioneer Square's only extant contact with Elliott Bay. It's location and design responds to Alaskan Way. In past ferry expansion discussions, Historic Seattle did not support moving the structure from its current location. This structure, now in poor condition, is planned for removal and reinstallation as a part of all viaduct alternatives. While Historic Seattle strongly supports the thoughtful rehabilitation of this significant structure, we are also concerned about the integrity of Pioneer Square as a historic district – and the district's historic relationship to the water evidenced by the boat landing – within the viaduct plans.

If it is necessary to move the Washington Street Boat Landing from the base of Washington Street, we strongly support careful consideration of the impact this will have on the district. Mitigation for this impact should involve coordination with the Pioneer Square Community Association and other interested parties. Historic Seattle would happily provide assistance in crafting a mitigation plan.

We appreciate your attention to the many details of this project and look forward to the continued development of alternatives for this very important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Chaney', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

John Chaney
Executive Director